

THE Life and Death of the Great Duke of Buckingham,

Who came to an untimely End, for consenting to the Deposing of the Two gallant Young Princes, King *Edward* the Fourth's Children.

To the Tune of *Shore's Wife*.

Note, As the Use of these Old Songs is very great, in respect that many Children never would have learn'd to Read, had they not took a Delight in porring over *Jane Shore*, *Robin Hood*, &c. which has insensibly stole into them a Curiosity and Desire of Reading other the like Stories, till they have improv'd themselves more in a short time than perhaps they would have done in some Tears at School: In order still to make them more useful, I premise to affix an Introduction, in which I shall point out what is Fact and what is Fiction in each Song; which will (as may be readily suppos'd) give not only Children, but Persons of more ripe Years, an Insight into the Reality, Intent and Design, as well as many times the Author and Time when such Song was made, which has not hitherto been explain'd.

When *Richard* Duke of *Gloucester* had resolv'd to deprive his two Nephews of the Crown, to put it upon his own Head, he gain'd the Duke of *Buckingham* over to his Interest; who zealously espous'd his Cause, not so much out of Love to *Richard*, as to gratify his own Ambition: Nor did he, in carrying on the Work, stick at any thing; removing those out of the way, who would not side with him. One of the most difficult Tasks, was to gain the City of *London*; which the Duke of *Buckingham* undertook. To this End, he made a Friend of *Shaw* the Lord Mayor, Brother to that *Dr. Shaw*, who had been employ'd to preach up the Bastardy of *Edward's* Issue; and he undertook to prepare the Citizens for such an Overture. On the Day appointed, the Duke came to the Guild-Hall of the City, and, in a studied Oration, inveighed against some Mismanagements of the late Reign; then reflecting on a Marriage-Contract *Edward* had made with another Lady before he married his Queen, he concluded, that the Protector was undoubted Heir to the Crown, and that the Lords of the Kingdom had resolv'd to set him upon the Throne. The Duke expected the People would have cried out, *Long live King Richard*; but, contrary to his Expectation, they all continued in a profound Silence. Upon this, turning about to the Mayor, he ask'd him the Meaning of what he saw? To which he (also surpriz'd) answer'd, He believed the People had not rightly understood him. The Duke arose a second time, repeated what he had said, and endeavour'd to explain every thing to them; but not a Man open'd his Mouth in Answer. The Mayor then told the Duke, the People were always accustomed to have such Overtures made them by the Recorder, and perhaps now expected it. The Recorder, therefore, was order'd to make the Motion to the People; and being oblig'd to obey, repeated the Duke's Speech, taking Care not to add a Word of his own; and, even by his manner of Speaking, sufficiently shewing, that he was proposing a Thing he utterly dislik'd. He ended, and had the Satisfaction of seeing the People continue in the same profound Silence. The Duke, very much nettled at this, rose up a third time, and said, That he was come thither to persuade them to concur in an Affair, where their Assistance perhaps would not be necessary; for the Nobility, and Commons of the other Provinces, would do it without them; but having a particular Affection for that Noble City, he desired that they might have the first Share of the Honour; and therefore he desired to know whether, in Conformity to the rest of the Kingdom, they would nominate the present Protector for the King. The Protector's and the Duke's Servants, who were at the lower End of the Hall, cry'd out, *A King Richard, a King Richard*. The Citizens, surpriz'd at this, look'd about them with Confusion: Which the Duke perceiving, laid hold of the Opportunity, and said, That he was transported to find such Unanimity in their Voices, with which, he assur'd them, he would acquaint the Protector. The next Day the Mayor, and a few of the Citizens, came to the Duke's House, and he went with them to *Baynard's* Castle, where the Protector resided; and the Duke, at the Head of the Citizens, made him a Proffer of the Crown, which *Richard* seemingly refus'd. Upon Consultation, the Duke made the Protector a second Speech, and acquainted him, that they were determin'd to reject a Bastard Issue, and put one upon the Throne who was able to reign. Which Proffer *Richard* comply'd with, and he accordingly ascended the Throne. The Duke of *Buckingham* now thought nothing could be denied him; and the first thing he ask'd for, was the Duke of *Hertford's* Estates, which was annex'd to the Crown Lands. But *Richard*, knowing his ambitious Temper, denied his Suit. This enraged the Duke so much, that he retir'd from Court to his Country Seat, and there enter'd into a strict Friendship with *Dr. Moreton* Bishop of *Ely*, and by them *Richard's* Ruin was first contriv'd. *Ely* plotted to recal the Earl of *Richmond*, and to make a Match between him and Lady *Elizabeth*, *Edward's* Daughter. But their Designs being discover'd before they could be effected, *Richard* sent for old *Buckingham* to Court, which he declin'd; but *Richard* laid his absolute Commands upon him; which the other slighted, and prepar'd to oppose him with open Force; and to that purpose, rais'd an Army; but not



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having wherewith to pay them, they disbanded themselves. Upon which the Duke of *Buckingham* fled, and having disguised himself, got to the House of one *Humphrey Banister*, formerly his Servant; but he had preferred him, and made his Fortune. Here the Duke, in Labourer's Attire, work'd in his Garden; but *Richard* issuing out a Proclamation, making it Death to shelter the fugitive Duke, and promising a Reward of 1000 l. to any who should discover him, *Banister* sold his Master; who, by *Richard's* Order, was carried to *Shrewsbury*, and on the 1st of November 1483. was beheaded in the Market-Place, (according to the Custom of those Times) without any Process. *Sir Thomas Moore* gives a long Account of the Misfortunes that befel *Banister*, and all his Family, in the manner they are related in the following Song. I shall only farther observe, that I do not believe the two last Stanza's genuine; they seem to have been added long since, tho' not both at the same Time, or by the same Hand.

A Tale of Grief I must unfold,
A Tale that never yet was told;
A Tale that might to pity move
The Sprights below, the Saints above.

When Wars did plague this Maiden Land,
Great *Buckingham* in Grace did stand;
With Kings and Queens he ruled so,
When he said Aye, none durst say No.

Great *Gloucester's* Duke, that wash'd the Throne
With Blood of Kings, to make't his own,
By *Henry Stafford's* Help obtain'd
What Reason will'd to be refrain'd.

If any Noble of this Land,
Against great *Gloucester's* Aid did stand;
Old *Buckingham*, with Might and Pow'r,
In grievous Woes did him devour.

He hop'd, when *Richard* was made King,
He would much greater Honours bring
To *Buckingham*, and to his Name,
And well reward him for the same.

In *Clarence's* Death he had a Hand,
And 'gainst King *Edward's* Queen did stand;
And to his Sons bore little Love,
When he as Bastards would them prove.

King *Edward* swore him by his Oath,
In true Allegiance to them both;
Which if I fail, I wish, quoth he,
All Christian Curse may light on me.

It so fell out, on *All-Souls* Day,
By Law his Life was ta'en away:
He had his With, tho' not his Will;
For Treason's End is always ill.

In *London* having pleaded Claim,
And *Richard* thereby won the Game;
He challeng'd Honour for his Gain,
But was rewarded with Disdain.

On which Disgrace, within few Hours,
Great *Buckingham* had rais'd his Pow'rs;
But all in vain, the King was strong,
And *Stafford* needs must suffer Wrong.

His Army fail'd, and durst not stand,
Upon a Traytor's false Command;
Being thus deceiv'd, old *Stafford* fled,
And knew not where to hide his Head.

The King with Speed to have him found,
Did offer full Ten Thousand Pound:
Thus *Richard* fought to cast him down,
Whose Wit did win him *England's* Crown.

The plain old Duke, his Life to save;
Of his own Man did Succour crave;
In hope that he would him relieve,
That late much Land to him did give.

Bafe *Banister* this Man was nam'd,
By this vile Deed for ever sham'd;
It is, quoth he, a common Thing
To injure him that wrong'd his King.

King *Edward's* Children he betray'd,
The like 'gainst him I well have play'd;
Being true, my Heart him greatly grac'd;
But proving false, that Love is past.

Thus *Banister* his Master sold
Unto his Foe, for Hire of Gold;
But mark his End, and rightly see,
The just Reward of Treachery.

The Duke by Law did lose his Head,
For him he sought to do most good;
The Man that wrought his Master's Woe,
By lingering Grief was brought full low.

For when the King did hear him speak,
How basely he the Duke did take;
Instead of Gold gave him Disgrace,
With Banishment from Town to Place.

Thus *Banister* was forc'd to beg
And crave for Food with Cap and Leg;
But none on him would Bread bestow,
That to his Master prov'd a Foe.

Thus wandering in his poor Estate,
Repenting his Misdeeds too late;
Till starved he gave up his Breath;
By no Man pitied at his Death.

To woful End his Children came;
Sore punish'd for their Father's Shame;
Within a Channel one was drown'd,
Where Water scarce could hide the Ground.

Another, by the Powers divine,
Was strangely eaten up of Swine;
The last a woful Ending makes,
By strangling in an empty Jakes.

Let Traytors thus behold and see,
And such as false to Masters be;
Let disobedient Sons draw near,
The Judgments well may touch them near.

Both Old and Young that live not well,
Look to be plagu'd from Heav'n or Hell;
So have you heard the Story then
Of this great Duke of *Buckingham*.